

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 SAA-01 IO-13 ACDA-12 A-01
OPR-02 SY-05 SSM-03 OC-06 CCO-00 MCT-02 HA-05
/110 W

-----037368 241528Z/50

O P 241428Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8852
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 4174

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, ASEC, LE
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION: JULY 24, 1300 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 4140 (DTG 231045Z JUL 78)

1. SUMMARY: SYRIAN ADF FORCES BOMBARDED THE
TOWN OF HADATH FOR THE THIRD DAY IN A ROW; THE RENEWED
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FIGHTING THREATENS LEBANON WITH ANOTHER MAJOR POLITICAL
CRISIS. CHRISTIAN LEADERS CRITICIZED THE SYRIANS AND GOL
BUT IN LESS STRIDENT TONES THAN DURING THE LAST ROUND.
AS SA'IQA LEADER ZUHAYR MUHSIN WARNED THAT ISRAELI
INTERVENTION WOULD ACCELERATE SYRIAN EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE
THE PHALANGE AND NLP. THERE ARE CONTINUING SIGNS OF
TENSION IN NORTH LEBANON. END SUMMARY.

2. HADATH SHELLED AGAIN.

A. SYRIAN ADF FORCES BOMBARDED THE TOWN OF HADATH FOR THE THIRD DAY IN A ROW THE EVENING OF JULY 23-24. ONE SMALL ARMS ROUND HIT THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE ON JULY 22 AND TWO MMORE ON JULY 23, BUT THERE WERE NO REPEAT NO CASUALTIES. AMBASSADOR PARKER SAFELY MOVED FROM YARZE TO APARTMENT IN OUR CHANCERY IN WEST BEIRUT AT 1000 HOURS, JULY 24, LOCAL TIME.

B. THE RENEWED FIGHTING THREATENS LEBANON WITH ANOTHER MAJOR POLITICAL CRISIS. IF IT IS NOT CONTAINED QUICKLY, PRESIDENT SARKIS MAY FEEL OBLIGED TO OFFER HIS RESIGNATION AGAIN, AND THIS TIME IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO WITHDRAW IT.

C. FIRING DIED DOWN AGAIN AT ABOUT 0300 HOURS ON JULY 24, BUT SOME SMALL ARMS FIRE AND OCCASIONAL SHELLING CONTINE AS OF 13:00 HOURS. L'ORIENT-LE JOUR REPORTED ON JULY 24 THAT THERE HAD BEEN 10 PEOPLE KILLED AND ABOUT 100 WOUNDED IN THE FIGHTING SO FAR. PHALANGIST VOICE OF LEBANON, HOWEVER, CITED ONLY THREE KILLED AND 11 WOUNDED. THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGNIFICANT FIGHTING IN OTHER PARTS OF EAST BEIRUT, AND SOME TRAFFIC BETWEEN EAST AND WEST BEIRUT CONTINUES. MOST OF THE EMBASSY'S LOCAL EMPLOYEES SHOWED UP FOR WORK MORNING OF JULY 24.

3. STATEMENTS BY CHRISTIAN LEADERS.

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CHRISTIAN LEADERS CRITIZED THE SYRIANS AND GOL, BUT IN LESS STRIDENT TONES THAN DURING THE LAST ROUND. NLP LEADER CAMILLE CHAMOUN ON JULY 23 PUBLICLY APPEALED TO "VALIANT SYRIAN SOLDIERS" NOT TO OBEY "ARBITRARY" ORDERS OF THEIR OFFICERS, AND TO "REFUSE TO KILL LEBANESE CITIZENS." DANY CHAMOUN SAID, "I ASK THE GOVERNMENT WHAT LAW AUTHORIZES THE SYRIANS TO BOMBARD THE CIVILIAN POPULATION?" PHALANGE LEADER PIERRE GEMAYEL APPEALED FOR SYRIAN COMPREHENSION OF LEBANON'S PROBLEMS AND SAID:

-- "UNDER WHAT LOGIC ARE TENS OF CITIZENS KILLED ON THE PRETEST THAT AN OUTLAW FIRED A SHOT OR COMMITTED AN INFRACTION?"

-- EVEN IF SOMEONE HAS COMMITTED AN ILLEGAL ACT, "IS IT IMAGINABLE THAT INHABITED NEIGHBORHOODS BE BOMBARDED, THAT OLD PEOPLE, WOMEN AND CHILDREN BE TERRORIZED," WHEN "CERTAIN FORCES" CAN ARREST THE GUILTY PERSON?

(COMMENT: GEMAYEL IS BEING DISINGENUOUS AT BEST WHEN HE ASSERTS THAT CRIMINALS CAN BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE. HE HAS CONSISTENTLY REFUSED TO TURN OVER PHALANGE MEMBERS ACCUSED OF ATTACKS ON

SYRIANS. END COMMENT.

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SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 SAA-01 IO-13 ACDA-12 A-01
OPR-02 SY-05 SSM-03 OC-06 CCO-00 MCT-02 HA-05
/110 W

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O P 241428Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8853

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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COMSIXTHFLT

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4. MUHSIN WARNS CHRISTIANS.

A. AS SA'IQA LEADER ZUHAYR MUHSIN IN AN INTERVIEW IN
THE JULY 24 EDITION OF THE WEEKLY MONDAY MORNING SAID THAT
THE NATIONAL LIBERAL AND PHALANGE PARTIES SHOULD DRAW A
LESSON FROM RECENT EVENTS; OTHERWISE, THE PARTIES COULD
EXPECT "ANOTHER . . . MORE VIOLENT BLOW." HE ADDED THAT THE
ARAB DETERRENT FORCE (ADF) WOULD NOT REMAIN IMMOBILE FOR
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MONTHS IN THE FACE OF PROVOCATIONS BY THE RIGHTIST PARTIES.

B. HE ACCUSED THE PHALANGE AND THE NLP LEADERS OF "DELUDING" THEIR FOLLOWERS BY LEADING THEM TO BELIEVE THAT "THE UNITED STATES, FRANCE AND BRITAIN WILL SACRIFICE THEIR INTERESTS AND MEN FOR THE SAKE OF BACHIR GEMAYEL AND CAMILLE CHAMOUN." MUHSIN WARNED THAT "ANY ATTEMPT TO SEEK ISRAELI MILITARY INTERVENTION WOULD ONLY ACCELERATE THE EFFORT TO ELIMINATE THE INTERNAL FORCES WHICH ARE COLLABORATING WITH ISRAEL."

C. MUHSIN ALSO SAID THAT "THE PALESTINIANS WOULD NOT OBJECT TO THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE LEBANESE ARMY TO SOUTH LEBANON, BECAUSE NO ARMY COULD BE WORSE THAN THE ARMY OF SA'AD HADDAD." MUHSIN ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE PALESTINIANS WOULD BE "VERY WARY" IF THE UNITS CAME FROM SARBA AND RUMYAH BARRACKS. (COMMENT: THE NAMES OF THESE TWO BARRACKS WERE CENSORED OUT OF THE INTERVIEW AS PUBLISHED. END COMMENT.)

5. TENSION IN NORTH. IN NORTH LEBANON, MEANWHILE, THERE ARE CONTINUING SIGNS OF INCREASED TENSION. ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT-LE JOUR, THE ADF ARRESTED 71 PEOPLE IN EL MINA (TRIPOLI), ANFAH, AMYUN AND DIDAH ON JULY 22-23. THE ARRESTED PEOPLE WERE ACCUSED OF VARIOUS CRIMES, INCLUDING ATTACKS ON ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH IN TRIPOLI AND THE HOUSE OF DEPUTY FUAD GHOSN IN THE KURA. ACCORDING TO ONE RELIABLE DATT SOURCE, ARRESTS WERE SYRIAN OPERATION AGAINST PHALANGISTS. ANOTHER DATT SOURCE REPORTED THAT ARMED CLASHES BETWEEN PHALANGIST AND FRANJIYAH MILITIAMEN OCCURRED ON JULY 22 IN DAYR AL AHMAR ON THE WESTERN EDGE OF THE BIQA'. DANY CHAMOUN TOLD AMBASSADOR JULY 23 SYRIANS WERE ALSO ROUNDING UP NLP MEMBERS IN BATROUN AREA. PARKER

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